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POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTICIPATORY RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The premise of the Report is that the current crisis of Africa is a reflection of social construction of short term gains. Hence, it has to be reconstructed to facilitate Participatory Rural Development (PRD), which is sine qua non of Africa's self-reliant recovery and development.

2. The Report argues that PRD requires a more democratic and decentralized politics, economics and culture. National policies' and strategies' appropriateness for PRD henceforth will have to be judged by exacting standards of a combination of economic growth, equity, institutional effectiveness, integration of women all aspects of life and sustainability.

3. The Report addresses the policy issues, the obstacles and constraints and the actions required for implementation of PRD at the following three levels, viz., (i) state; (ii) the intermediate service organization of the rural poor and other disadvantaged segment of the population like the women and (iii) local organization. An effective strategy or implementing PRD requires a systems approach and conscientization of the leaders of the local organizations and empowerment of the rural poor. Although a process of inter-disciplinary education and dialogue.

4. The Report suggests that the states may create an enabling climate at national level by appropriate decentralization. Such a climate will encourage the rural poor set up their own intermediate institutions both as service organizations and defensive mechanism. These institutions will be hybrid in functions and form their own co-operative federations. These federations will be catalytic and capacity building. They will need to collaborate with the existing local organizations, based on clan, age-set, brotherhood and diverse communal aid efforts.

5. In the light of the above analysis, which has been detailed in the Report, the member States may wish to consider the following major recommendations to:

(i) institutionalize a new form of state-citizen dialogue, making provision for participation of the rural poor and other disadvantaged segment of the population such as women for self-reliant rural development, with equity;

(ii) provide scope for healthier state-rural relations by political decentralization. By redesigning power and implementation effectiveness, as well as due to resource limitations, the logic and practicality of decentralization will grow, opening space for new or more active forms of associational life such as intermediate institutions;

(iii) facilitate rural poor to build up their own intermediate institutions as both service organizations and defensive mechanism. They need to organize themselves into small groups, working as a co-operative federation for such intermediate organizations to be viable. An organized poor is the essential foundation and support for participatory rural development. A federation of the organized poor may be involved with agricultural specialists working for intermediate service organizations, which mediate farming systems research. Over time many line agency local staff might move to intermediate organizations for more secure, development career. Federations would take a larger role in line agency policy making to assure more gender, class, and regional equality and more focus on organic, self-reliant agronomic practice and ecological renewal. Current reform efforts in agricultural research and credit go part way, illustrating the limits of reform created from the top down alone;

(iv) consider the possibility of carefully staged process of selective de-linking from the decades of "dependent development" and bondage while building relatively autonomous, if not self-reliant economic base for participatory rural development at home;

(v) take concrete steps to make formal educational institutions more responsive to the development needs of rural Africa. Teacher training and the basic curriculum need to put more emphasis on the uses of literacy, numeracy, basic science and health issues for rural careers in farming, agro-industry, social and market services. Every line agency should build in career training modules on development and challenge and reward personnel for further self-directed learning and leadership initiative;

(vi) build up skills and institutions at the local and regional levels. Young school leavers, with idealism, could be particularly open to such a challenge for PRD.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

1. Africa has the potential to substantially improve its rural sector in nearly all regions of most countries; even though the record of the last three decades is not a function of the possible, but rather one of language, culture, institutions, and politics. The current crisis is in fact a reflection of a social construction by some for short-term gain at the expense of others. What can be constructed can be deconstructed and reconstructed. Indeed such a process is inevitable for Africa's self reliant recovery and development. This Report proposes to show how such a process may be facilitated over time.

2. The Report is organized in five Sections. Section - I is introductory. It considers history of poverty and presents the theory of participatory praxis. Section - II discusses the role of member-States and the issues they face at the national level. Section - III attempts to make a case for building up intermediate institutions for group efforts by the rural poor for their self-reliant and sustainable development. Section - IV argues for local organizations and empowerment people. Section - V has the conclusions and recommendations of the Report.

3. The overall prescriptive, model for participatory rural development, has been built on prolonged global debates and promising small-scale experiments in various parts of the developing countries.[1/] In Africa the papers, proceedings and the report of besides others, the ECA-sponsored International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, (Arusha, Tanzania, 12-16 February 1990) provide evidence of the growing interest in participatory rural development and in desire to rebalance power and legitimacy to this end.

4. The task begins here with expanding and crystallizing areas of possible consensus for authentic rural development. Development and political education must be geared to expanding the legitimacy of the latter as the cornerstone of a healthy society. Such a society will become more possible first by a process of raising critical consciousness about the urgent need to accelerate rural development on a self-reliant and equitable basis. From an interdisciplinary and systems perspective the need for substantial progress in African rural development is a complex and yet compelling issue.

5. Subsistence survival is not assured for many. Between 25 and 40 per cent of African households in most societies cannot meet annual subsistence needs. Given status quo policies, the situation will deteriorate. The physical size of countries will not grow. Few have much more available arable land. Average holdings cannot indefinitely diminish. Urban migration often contributes to rather than lessens rural poverty by draining the best educated, most innovative from marginal areas. The over all cost of failing to meet subsistence needs of the rural poor are staggering. No society seems to have dared any real accounting. The total social cost of structural imbalance, of creating producers but not a requisite mass market of consumers is enormous.

6. A related second issue is the inefficiency built into misbalanced regional growth in terms of additional transport costs and price fluctuations in highly imperfect markets. Poverty taxes women especially

harshly. Insecurity is the primary motive for the creation of large families, and women pay heavy physical and psychological costs. One ought to add finally the social and economic drains of investment in children who don't get the pre- and post-natal care to reach age one (or five) and the long-term costs of lifetime care of the disabled (river blindness, etc).

7. Environmental decline should be of more than local concern yet current and future crises are usually mystified by food imports and technological promises. After decade of investment, there are still not many hopeful signs of great and sustainable productivity gains for farms on fragile dryland soils. It is reasonable to seek different learning processes and consider the incentives of all involved. Peasants do not despoil their commons or deplete soils by preference.

8. A recent report on environmental rehabilitation efforts in the northern highlands of Ethiopia reveals both causes and solutions, providing a good educational tool. Peasants who lack long-term security of landholding or land use are unlikely to rebuild a healthy long-term contract with nature. Given real security and control, peasants have both the skill and the willingness to invest in renewal with little or no outside aid.[2]/

9. A third issue which should bring urgency to addressing rural poverty is the deepening financial crisis of the state. African states, like most others, have long been unable to live within their means. Many look upon the rural needs of the poor as unaffordable. The financial plights of states vary, but all would benefit from more prosperous citizens who paid taxes. A rich universe of small credit experience worldwide illustrates specific conditions under which the rural poor can mobilize their own savings and rapidly expand incomes.[3]/

10. The spatial and structural evolution of employment in Africa provides a fourth compelling argument for balanced rural growth. The current solutions to unemployment in Africa as elsewhere, are far from satisfactory. Cities cannot expand indefinitely. The catchall concept of the informal sector, hides significant inequalities and the vulnerablities of most households.[4]/ Current reformist and remedial employment programmes reach a tiny percentage of the needy; resources do not exist to expand such programmes to scale. Yet alternative programmes like ORAP in Zimbabwe indicate the practicality of inexpensive participatory rural development.

11. There are also compelling cultural reasons for an alternative development policy and the acceleration of development rather than growth. One is the plight of women who produce most of the food yet remain disempowered by markets, politics, and patriarchy. A second is the alienation of labor. It is not utopian to imagine recreating culture and institutions so that work is not a survival necessity to satisfy material urges but rather an activity of self-actualization and enjoyment. Africa's rural households will not prosper with the cultural status quo.

12. The discussion that follows will argue that, to overcome these kinds of dilemmas and constraints, African societies need to build far more decentralized and democratic politics, economics, and culture. This strategy is known as participatory development. Policies and projects are to be judged by tough standards, a <u>combination</u> of growth, equity, institutional effectiveness, and sustainability.

13. Some African rural households have always been poor in the sense of being unable to meet basic needs. Other than that, there has been little agreement in modern times about the nature, the causes, or the cures of poverty. In both public policy and academe, partisans of specific disciplines or schools of thought have defined both the problem of poverty and its cure in terms of what is most comfortable. Economists locate and prescribe for market imperfections but ignore patriarchy and most women's work. A better approach is to discern different types of poverty resulting from different social processes and historical circumstances.

14. There are at least two kinds of structural poverty and other forms of conjunctural poverty.5/ One structural type appears common in all areas: people have lacked labor power because of age or infirmity. Structural poverty from land scarcity is a recent phenomenon in Africa. In this century landlessness has grown appreciably, especially in Southern Africa. In some regions apartheid has staged the creation of extreme conditions; by the 1980s many other regions and traditional production systems were facing a resource crisis.

15. Conjunctural poverty is the temporary poverty created by war, pestilence, and plague and lack of political power excluding the poor from access to resources. The slave trade and colonialism created such poverty. In this century wars continue to impoverish, but the major cause of poverty is the growth of concentrated political and economic power and its use of culture and institutions to marginalize the poor.

16. Historically inhabitants of rural Africa in most societies did not look to the state to aid them in times of poverty or distress. Instead they looked to family, both nuclear and extended, and to friends. The capacity and willingness of family to assist has varied with culture, time, and location. In general terms the spread of market relations has stressed and broken such support networks.

17. In the post-colonial era they watched a series of officially inspired growth efforts come and go, and learned to distinguish, as in a member State between developpement de fonctionnaires and development paysan.6/ But official development, sponsored by states and agencies, has and continues to have a dominant role over both the definition of poverty and the prescriptions and large scale resource flows that result.

18. The neatest synopsis of the intellectual basis of these state-sponsored growth appears in a major work of Latin America.7/ It identifies six schools of thought with partial analysis and prescriptions. Neo-Malthusians show population growth to be outrunning production and seek radical population control efforts and ways to create appropriate incentives for smaller families. Technological determinists look at past success in agricultural growth but see no correlation between such growth and rural stratification. Instead they seek to reduce poverty by improving technical packages and their distribution. Monetarists blame market imperfections that destroy the incentive to invest or trade; their solutions ignore private monopoly and seek to curb state power. Structuralists look at the way the poor are excluded from the means of production; policy is typically reduced to land reform. Some critics of overdevelopment point to overconsumption by elites, especially food consumption in the North; culture

change and redistributive policies are suggested. Finally there are the liberal reformists who argue that poverty comes from lack of access to productive resources and good jobs. Job and nutrition programmes are proposed.

19. These six debates illustrate the lack of systems thinking built into twentieth century social science. Thus culture, gender, ecology institutions and, most of all, power are given, at best, partial attention. The workings of a world-system and its agencies in the production and expansion of rural inequality receive minor or minimal attention. In most samples of national approaches and project types it is therefore not systems thinking that is evident but one or more of the six arguments above.

SECTION II: ROLE OF MEMBER STATES: TASKS AND CHALLENGES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

20. Member States of Africa are in an unenviable position. As organizations they are terrains of struggle between contending domestic and international forces with self-interested agendas. The struggle will not end soon, so what is proposed here is to view the state as a loosely structured social system within which interested and competent activists can build or expand islands of peace and development that could usefully nurture intermediate organizations, expand national consciousness about real development, facilitate contact with kindred organizations elsewhere. Over time these islands of development can also foster a less hierarchical and patriarchal work culture within state institutions.

21. The discussion begins with the dilemmas of the member States seeking to maintain legitimacy in the face of human needs. The political culture inherited from precolonial tributary states was typically not democratic; but rulers in that era earned legitimacy at least in part by conforming to a moral economy and meeting some obligations to their subjects. The next historical era of colonialism were even less democratic.

22. The first generation of post-colonial elites naturally found power appealing and sought to maintain and enhance their privileges. Such goals appeared to conflict with mass aspirations for better living standards, and both ran around on the issue of finances. Resources could in theory have come from personal taxes; but income taxes requires citizenry, government delivery of services, and leadership by example from elites. Leadership instead generally looked to indirect taxes that were practical to collect, especially a tax on export and a reduction in real rural producer prices. A few tried to present a more democratic view of mutual responsibility between state and society. A few others were able to become oil exporters. Most were pushed into the expedient solution of expanding primary commodity exports into international markets which peripheral countries could little influence.

23. Modest and uncertain export taxes and foreign exchange earnings were insufficient even to meet the expanded state payrolls. Borrowing abroad and foreign aid became unavoidable. Maintaining the stratified society and nondemocratic politics and culture of their inheritance seemed inevitable in order to limit outlays. One party states and centralization were logical institutional solutions to retain power and allocate scarce resources.

24. Despite an era of relative political stability most African states that made the series of choices sketched above, found the results unsatisfactory. Joining the United Nations and multilateral agencies provided some international prestige and facilities. Aid flows were helpful in building legitimacy among some sectors of local capital, but local capital was still not in most cases strong enough to be much of an ally in the new and uneven triple alliance African states had entered.8/ This triple alliance of the state, local capital, and international capital had reason to help each other but the particiption of the poor was neither needed nor desired. The poor were of no use as either producers, consumers or taxpayers.

25. The influx of aid made the state structure an attractive terrain of struggle among domestic factions as well as source of entrepreneurial profit making for those whose salaries could not keep up with inflation or family needs. Aid flows, however, encouraged states to live beyond their means and entrapped them on many levels. The debt trap, erosion of legitimacy and erosion of sovereignty to the International Financial Institutions has been the most heavily chronicled.9/

26. The continuing economic crisis is forcing at least some in every state system to see the limits of the export and aid model. Financial crisis, limited aid potential, the growth of parallel economies all suggest the need for new low cost initiatives to rebuild both state legitimacy and finances. There has been a rich local associational life in most African societies.10/ As or if the state becomes better enlightened and gives scope for new more democratic local organizations, the potential opens for more cost-effective, legitimate, and equitable public policy.

27. These conclusions impel a brief discussion of a healthy state and the practical steps of its social creation. All societies need central institutions because they are a number of tasks that are more efficient and practical to be carried out at the state level. While some task divisions may seem logical the ultimate effectiveness of any institution depends on its legitimacy, trust, and accountability. These characteristics are created by democratic processes of high quality.

28. Two questions crystallize practical problems: how much quality and how much particiption. Democracy has costs, but so does every other system. Africa has a rich heritage of partially democratic local association and clan groups that can be adapted to many purposes. The development since 1976 of the Six-S movement, based on traditional village co-operative groups in a member State called Naams, now totalling 4,000 groups in nine countries of West Africa, is one example of local inventiveness. But learning from local creativity alone will not be enough.

29. The democratization of state institutions must draw on both participatory processes and substantive expertise. In each situation member States must look self-critically not only at their cultural orientations (patriarchy for example) but also at the quality of education being brought to bear. There are global debates going on on the nature of democracy, worker management and ownership and most other aspects of development. The costs of not being informed or current are severe. The United Nations University series on African political economy is only a start.

30. Thus state level organizations need to marshall and mold both the cultural and educational diversity available and develop a local to global learning mode. A practical process begins with small group educational efforts within an agency leading to more formal seminars. Such seminars could lead into the agency planning process to budget for regular learning sessions, house critics, new standards of professional rewards and advance, a global learning centre, agency standards for political appointments, agency publications and interaction with the global development studies community.

31. It is important that activists and educators inside specific agencies realize that good ideas and policy cannot advance very far toward

implementation without agreement at other political levels and in other social spheres. In a transition period and beyond, organizational activists must build and maintain allies at the global, province and local levels, in other agencies, in academe, the media, the churches and elsewhere. Sustained success requires a combination of long-term allies who collectively can push policy reform through the system, monitor the quality of implementation, and do the research to insure that subsequent change efforts are even better.

32. Education is a central focus of every part of the participatory development process. The foundation of national development education is a core group of indigenous scholars who build their skills over time and capacity for an interdisciplinary grasp of development involving five areas of study: historical sociology and global economic system; political economy; area studies, especially anthropology; organization studies; and one or more technical fields. There is no such academic programme now available anywhere so much of this education will have to be part of self development. There are guides to such an educational adventure, some quite inexpensive.11/ But access to many publications is quite expensive and thus raises a large challenge to governments and potential donors.

33. Academic programmes need more than core faculty; they need universities, buildings, support staff, libraries, research funds, student stipends and housing, and more. Africa can afford a small number of very fine universities and a good number of reasonably good colleges. It is hard to see how optimal choices can be made without powerful, competent regional authorities. Reformist solutions look more practical.

34. Institutional reform in African academe is as difficult as elsewhere. Many people need to make what they might feel are career sacrifices. As in any institution it takes step by step building of a critical mass of internal and external allies. Different disciplines guard their guilds with vigor; administration guards their perquisites. The needs of the major teaching university should be balanced against regional colleges and secondary schools. This will be hard until regional economies and tax bases are built up and province governments given some financial authority. Part of what makes the regional college situation now so unbearable is the financial powerlessness.

35. Moral suasion and tangible rewards should go to faculty doing field research leading to practical solutions to the society's development problems. School leavers now suffer because of unbalanced development; they want jobs in sectors where there are not enough consumers. Some will be employed by intermediate and local organizations as subsequent sections here illustrate. But social planning for development will be the key; a member State's current efforts with 55 growth points are one possibility. Social planning will only work if society is involved. Development education needs to be built into many other spheres of life.

36. A core element in all of these formal and informal education efforts needs to be the lesson of success. Africa needs to make visible a body of case material about its own development success, even if they are small ones. At every level of society people need to see tangible evidence of where and how small groups of people were able to make use of limited resources to improve livelihoods in an equitable and sustainable manner.

37. A second area of public policy crucial to the effectiveness of intermediate and local organizations and the ending of rural poverty concerns the prevailing formal institutions mandated to improve agriculture. These include most often an Agricultural or Rural Development Ministry, a marketing agency and a rural bank. These institutions play an awkward mediating role between the actors of the triple alliance and the peasantry. Set up and funded by states, such agencies reflect in structure and practice most of the larger system's approach of mobilizing the more productive farm households and ignoring the rest. But each institution also contains people with more developmental goals, swimming upstream against serious obstacles.

38. A short summary of them should suffice. Most agriculture line agencies suffer first from their historical legacies; peasants remember field agents as tax collectors and then decades of failed projects. Both politics and structure now impede effective dialogue with the poor. The line agency is funded by the state, not by the poor; it must contend with its political limits in the budget process, state policies of cheap urban food, subsidies for exports, and other tax and monetary policies unhelpful to sustainable rural development.

39. The institutional framework of an agricultural ministry is also inappropriate for effective assistance to the poor. Technical training is useful, but far from sufficient. Such education must be balanced with institutional, cultural and ecological learning. Production quotas issued from top down encourage attention to those farmers easiest to reach. The locally vocal will also be served. Neither the poor nor the women are likely to be much noticed. Small numbers of field agents with limited mobility, time and resources thus find it usually impractical to assist the poorest of the poor, regardless of intention or public policy.

40. Some agricultural scientists and rural practitioners in the 1970s and 1980s realized the limitations of technical packages designed far away. Peasants were not resisting out of politeness or indifference. A new research process evolved in a few Latin American and African settings was termed farming systems research.12/ It began with the hypothesis that cognitive respect of household dynamics, not just single crop production mattered. Multi-crop systems often had a superior logic. A participatory process of field trials and field research developed which in the best of circumstances produced both useful innovations and mutual respect legitimizing new practices.

41. Rural credit reform provides an even clearer example of the institutional limitations of top down reforms. Recent initiatives in Ghana and Malawi indicate the systemic and cultural obstacles to an ideal solution as well as the central role credit will play in any solution. The absence of a sufficient and user-friendly rural credit system has been noted in many rural African societies. Loan arrears in existing systems have often been embarrassing. In the later part of the 1980s the comparative success of the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh began to be noticed.

42. The experiences of Ghana 13/ and Malawi 14/ suggest that, for rural credit to help the poor in large numbers, the process must involve the self-organization of the poor working with an independent banking entity, rather than village banks or funds subject to local politics. The Grameen

experience shows that participation and control are the keys to local resource mobilization.15/ Group lending and process are key to effectiveness, a social identity, and quality citizenship. Contrary to conventional banking ideology, collateral is not necessary because group suasion and regular supervision assure near total repayment if the group regards the institution as legitimate. Movement building starts with building small healthy foundations under the protection of Grameen Bank as an intermediate organization; centres of five groups work with branch offices. Equality and legitimacy are built together; sustainability grows as members regularly invest in and also buy shares in Grameen. In sum, it will be a process much like this, as other African examples have begun to show, that will allow rural poor the means to empower themselves.

43. A third area of national public policy which currently works against the poor and participatory development is the general macroeconomic framework of uneven, export-led growth, highly imperfect markets and highly unequal income and resource distribution. It has been argued that given how common and enduring such conditions are on the periphery of the world-system, they must be the logical products of the dynamic expansion of a system exhibiting both long and short-term cyclical behaviour and growing unevenly by technological change, commodifying more areas of life and expanding to new geographical regions. Is this the only possible path unless one has a substantial surplus of oil?

44. History has positive and constructive lessons as well. There was an important experiment in self-reliant development in Paraguay between 1815 and 1840.16/ Space here permits brief review only of the most successful long-term effort by once poor Scandinavian countries, an effort sustained for more than a century in which they moved from the periphery to the industrial core and now rank 2nd, 4th 6th and 11th in the world on UNDP's new Human Development Index, 1990. Member States may study what these societies did, a carefully staged process of selective delinking from England for a period of time while building relatively democratic politics and economics at home.17/ Important contrasts can be drawn with Irish and Uruguayan economic history, among many, following the advice of core affluent powers and therefore staying poor.

45. The policies themselves are not particularly surprising. Long-term success came from the quality, staging, and integration of economic and socio-institutional change. A summary of thirteen key elements follows. 18/

Economic Policies:

(i) An early switch away from primary products to processed products for export - ending enclaves and building dynamic links and a national economy.

(ii) Large-scale production working toward a local mass market.

(iii) Innovative, continuous readaption to the world market.

(iv) Broadbased, import-substitution industrialization.

Social and Political Policies

(i) Defeudalization - a smallholder policy and land reform so that agricultural structure does not impede.

(ii) Policies to produce moderate rather than gross inequality.

(iii) Income distribution and environment for saving and productive investment, not conspicuous consumption.

(iv) Developing a high average level of education.

(v) Public and private enterprise conditioned to take risk, and a functional domestic credit system.

(vi) Politically organized peasantry and labor party to counteract the weight of urban interests, the state bureaucracy, etc.

(vii) Spread of technological innovation to all sectors.

(viii) Increasing democratization from political development - creating thus a stable and legitimate political framework.

(ix) Appropriate infrastructure development interlinking agriculture and industry.

46. Each Scandinavian society followed a slightly different path. Denmark in the 19th century, for example, managed defeudalization, the switch to agroprocessing, folk schools with high levels of education, the self organization of rural co-operatives, and liberal politics. The export-led growth policies pursued by most African societies have in contrast produced extraverted growth at best that has blocked balanced development and generated inequality and fiscal crisis.

47. In sum, it is premature to offer prescription on the contours of prices, markets and balanced growth. Each society must undertake a sustained, comparative historical inquiry, build up its empirical base and social planning capacity and create the solid foundations for such change. It is to those foundations the report now turns.

SECTION III: INTERMEDIATE INSTITUTIONS: KEY TO SUCCESS OF PARTICIPATORY RURAL DEVELOPMENT

48. The core of the strategic argument for appropriate institutional decentralization and participatory development is a positive one. The current scale of external resources will not change much, so accelerating progress can only come by using available resources far more productively. The great and largely untapped sources for African societies are the labor and capital of many people at the local level. These are the poor, now marginalized by the market, by institutions, by geography and most of all by culture - patriarchy and stigmatization of the poor by which the non-poor psychologically divorce themselves and mystify the systemic interconnections of the creation of wealth and poverty. The poor do not invest more because they cannot do it with security of result. Participation thus has both utilitarian and ethical dimensions. The poor should control the processes of development in which they are involved in both because it is right and because such a social process produces optimal results for the society as a whole.

49. In this part of the Report, the key questions, therefore concern the best institutional environment in which small group efforts by the poor will prosper and grow in a sustainable and relatively self-reliant way. The discussion begins with the theory of mediation and intermediacy. Some recent experiences in decentralization then illustrate many of the obstacles and some of possibilities. The prevailing institutional terrain of formal, informal and third sector activities offers a host of strategic problems but also potential allies and some constituent elements of new social and institutional formations.

50. The experience of a member State shows that the rural poor need their own intermediate institutions as both service organizations and as a defensive shield from powerful political and economic forces.19/ Such intermediate entities, to be affordable or scale efficient, require the rural poor to organize into small groups working as a co-operative federation with one or more levels of service organizations. Individual poor households or single small group projects are not usually sustainable without a support system. The support system should be catalytic and capacity-building for the poor; at the same time it needs to defend the organizations of the poor.

51. The degree and nature of mediation varies with task and the level of antagonism and insecurity in the social system. No standard formula exists, yet there should be a conscious effort to relate task and scale of institutions. Large organizations, for example, cannot be expected to assist individual poor people. Effectiveness, here and elsewhere, is a function of a balance between power and legitimacy. All bureaucratic organizations exhibit some of the same generic drives; they pursue security, control and growth. Neither centralized political power nor centralized institutional power appear legitimate to the marginal poor.

52. It is not simply a matter of political power and a lack of democratic participation. Organizations also disempower by their work process and energy intensity. Organizations have standard forms to be submitted by deadlines; that requires literacy, transport and free time by would-be

users. Funding leads to reports and deadlines even within NGO projects; even one of the more competent intermediate organizations can find modest paperwork burdensome.

53. Appropriate decentralization is thus imperative on political, economic and cultural grounds. Yet appropriateness will be a function of the needs of the actors in the process. Recent African experiences with decentralization indicate that whatever the political configuration, if the poor are inactive, they will not be well served. 20/

54. The unsurprising conclusion from the decentralization experience of some member States of Africa is that the existing institutional terrain between the national level and the village tends to represent the prevailing social, political and cultural formations. In particular the party and bureaucratic elite as well as the well-to-do farmers and traders are likely to be well represented, if not directly active, in the implementation of public policy and "development" projects that are ratified by the larger system. Yet even in the most inhospitable environment there are spaces for remedial action. The underlying strategic principle can be stated in several ways: society is a composite of conflicting value systems. Intermediate institutions for the poor will have to interact with, build tactical and long-term alliances, defend against, and draw upon at least four groups of institutional actors: (i) line agencies of the state; (ii) state and local government; (iii) local political and economic elites; and (iv) local associations, NGOs, cultural groups, and similar independent group activities.

55. While there is some literature on the political dilemmas of small groups, there is apparently no serious study or collection of case material on the strategies of development-focused social movements in Africa; cultural, military and political mobilizations have been studied but their contexts are only partially comparable. So each venture should be considered in part an action-research project in contemporary history. Conventional society repeats the same mistakes endlessly, but social movements cannot afford to, so they must be effective learners.

56. All of the formal institutions in the arena have a history, a historical memory and a way that such history is articulated. Each new development federation will have to grow in a specific social and historical context. The people who know this history are the local residents. Part of the early preparatory effort must thus be participatory research, a joint venture to dig into their own history.

57. Line agencies are under many kinds of pressures as lower level bureaucrats with huge responsibilities and finite resources. Provincial and district personnel are sometimes indigenous to the area and/or develop some local loyalties. Such personnel, however, are often moved from one district to another, which expands the amount of organizational work for the intermediate organization. In either case the basic appeal should not be made on primordial loyalty but no logic and cost effectiveness. The existence of a competent development federation of the poor makes the job of technical line agency personnel easier and more efficient. Development federations will find it possible to build up their own technical and market knowledge upto a point. Certain roles will need to be played by larger institutions. There is thus a natural division of responsibility.

Co-operative links between the two could be built in a mutually beneficial manner.

58. Provincial, district and local government are usually described as comprising those segments most desirous and successful at acquiring political positions for private agendas. There are classic case studies on this theme for some member States of Africa, inter alia, and on the general reproduction of inequality in Africa. 21/ Yet like institutions in all areas of society, local governments are social creations at a particular moment in history. These levels of state structure are also under pressure to mediate between state demands and local realities and to respond to local ecological crisis and famine. Development federations of the poor need at least political space and tolerance without cooptation. In most dialogues there should be some areas of common interest. It cannot be prideful to preside over a stagnant community with vast human needs unmet; conversely there are multiple community benefits in most real development activities. There is clearly room and appeal for an alternative vision.

59. Much of the same dialogue can be attempted with local economic elites whose interests may be affected sooner or later. Flexible strategy is in order. Inevitably a few will view any development movement by the poor as a direct threat to control over credit and market systems. In some cases resource redistribution is inevitable. In such situations timing and style are of the essence. Worth serious study is the negotiating and networking style of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh which must confront rich landlords, moneylenders and patriarchy on a regular basis. 22/ There are important lessons there on the power of group suasion, of networking in the power structure and building healthy foundations and vertical alliances before challenging power structures. Yet there are in each society many potential allies and institutions, or fragments thereof, that could take on specific local responsibilities, some nearly immediately and some with varying amounts of further training. The world of African NGOs is highly diverse. In general there is little evaluation capability built into conventional NGO activity. The personnel for the new intermediate institutions must go through regular evaluation and have opportunity for advance and reward. One cannot sustain a high quality service organization on good values and voluntary effort.

60. As a preliminary step to putting several institutions and activists together to create a draft curriculum for political, institutional and cultural education and community organizing training, it would be well to prepare some institutional profiles and assessments of current training and field activities of local NGOs. By melding the work of savvy indigenous social critics, many of the key people, institutions and evaluation questions for this initial training will become visible.

61. With a strategy to survive environmentally and with at least minimally qualified staff, it is time to posit a vision of the ideal intermediate institutional framework, how it might be funded and what tasks it should take on. The institutional vision begins with a division of tasks: the number and complexity of tasks suggests at least two levels of support organizations for the development catalyst and local groups or base organizations.23/

62. Tasks might be broken down like this. A larger number would work directly with development catalysts and local groups to provide day to day assistance. One such institution might help eight to fifteen local groups with a full-time staff of three to six. These paraprofessionals should not be expected to handle very technical issues or the bureaucratic needs and the political problems created by outside agencies and other social forces. The second level of the development federation would take on these tasks with technically and legally skilled personnel. Depending on population and terrain there might be one or several per district. For those involved in primary health care, this institutional model will look very familiar.

63. Resource and personnel to begin these two kinds of intermediate organizations will have to come primarily from external sources at the beginning. As quickly as possible local people should assume many but not all roles. Many kinds of detailed social learning inherent to any successful project activity depend upon people making others involved sensitive to local realities. Yet it is also important that some staff represent varied cultural backgrounds. Young school leavers with rural roots and poor urban prospects will respond to a socially meaningful challenge. Development academics and line agency personnel would benefit from such a sabbatical yet they might resent some of the necessary training. The best of indigenous and foreign NGO personnel could be appealed to as could some of the technically qualified volunteers from various countries.

64. Initial funding might be hard to find but would not be very great. Salaries would be pegged to local conditions. Costs per person would be far lower than government or even NGO activity. At a rough estimate, one local federation could total 103 positions: one central resource entity, eight to ten local service organizations each assisting multiple development catalysts and base organizations. It could cost in the range of $50,000 to $60,000 a year, plus start up and activity costs like a line of small credit. Multiple forms of empowerment would reach 5,000 to 8,000 people. Over time, perhaps as soon as eight to ten years (and thus a good evaluation criteria) such federations should become relatively self-reliant. Self-reliance here means that local organizations should be able to generate new resources and income and villagers feel so well served by the federation that they are willing to invest regularly in its maintenance.

65. Funding will not be the only hard challenge for the intermediate organization. Working oneself out of a job is always a severe challenge; here the task is, "to exert influence over people for the purpose of building their capacity to control their own lives"24/ At the same time the social form organization must not reproduce new forms of elitism; it must instead be a nurturing, post-patriarchal work culture supporting both specific task achievement and the creative, risk-taking behaviour needed to overcome many ambiguities and obstacles. The specific tasks can be grouped under eight headings: service delivery, education; community organization; advocating and expediting; referral; record keeping; data collection and analysis; and demonstrating and testing. 25/

66. Community organizing is the central task of the development catalyst and thus an issue in Section IV. Here the support roles begin with an initial formalized training period. The Grameen model has much to recommended it. Learning by immersion and participatory research should

preface any formal field assignment. If the development catalysts are recruited locally, there are multiple advantages; skills learned stay in the community and can be built on indefinitely. The village does not lose the social investment of other villagers at whatever pace they become involved, since the catalyst remains. Yet it is crucial that the base organization develop its own leadership skills and development vision. In some situations there may not appear right away an interested and capable local citizen. Experiments have also done well with couples and other individuals with rural backgrounds.

67. Besides training and facilitating capital and resources for true development catalyst, much of the work of both levels of intermediate organizations falls into the category of education. Development is a permanent learning experience, not the transfer of specific technical knowledge from one more learned to one less so. One means of empowerment is books. Each development federation needs a core research and social change library and each local centre a modest library of practical titles and others in appropriate languages to give moderately literate villagers the chance to build their dreams. Literacy classes should be considered in every possible venue where local school systems falls short.

68. Expanding the primary health system must be another strong focus. Intermediate organizations need to facilitate funding and training of village health care workers, agitate with the national health system and any other potential donors for the needed clinics and supplies, and engage in open-ended advocacy for preventive approaches to medical care. There are a number of good anthologies on participatory health practices and system.26/

69. Literate and healthy citizens, contemplating new productive possibilities, improving market conditions, or alternative credit mechanisms, face a very major series of obstacles in the legal system, especially as articulated by local elites to preserve privilege and exclude the poor. Without challenge, mobilization can be forestalled, information cut off, local group enterprises impoverished, etcetera. A growing field of literature on law and development has, however, marshalled case studies and practical procedures to show how to get paralegal resources into the hands of base organizations. Each development federation needs such skills, so it should facilitate and support creation of regional training centres. There are likely to be substantive local conflicts from time to time.

70. Many other kinds of educational capacity-building will keep the development federation personnel busy. More technical aid is needed. So building knowledge on African and global experience in appropriate technology is called for. Another task will be to monitor many kinds of regional and national economic conditions. Over time when good bonds of trust develop between intermediate and base groups, the former will also get involved in more formal local participatory research on specific economic issues.

71. One other area of educational capacity-building merits attention here as in Section IV: If the development federation is trying to promote real development and thus an equitable, post-patriarchal and ecologically sustainable culture, it must encourage an internal work culture and practice to match its publicly stated goals. This means that in daily interchanges,

in meetings, in work assignments, in hiring, in promotion and all other organizational processes there should be no discrimination of any kind - gender, ethnic group, age, pedigree and so forth. Indeed there should be regular internal consciousness-raising on these difficult terrains. Africa must not marginalize half its society because they are women. A representative number of visible women professionals in the development federation will send powerful development messages throughout the region. The absence of women staff will remain a sober commentary on the quality and potential of the federation to end rural poverty.

72. The stress on the educational work of the intermediate organizations is not to downplay the activities more directly focused on material livelihood. Local organizations will identify small credit, infrastructure development, environmental regeneration, small industry, agricultural marketing and similar projects as being primary. It is important in any group effort to have successful income generation early in its development because long-term volunteer efforts are very hard to sustain. There are a number of institutinal models available if local groups decide on one type of project. Each federation must build its education on alternative credit experiences, Grameen and others. Yet it is not clear that each federation should become just a local office of a larger African version of a group credit effort. The ORAP centres of technology transfer, the rural service and growth centres in certain member States suggest different models. Prescription from far away seems illogical given the impact of local material conditions and felt needs on federation activities.

73. That the resulting organization may be a hybrid - part school, part bank, part agricultural research centre, part something else - is not a bad idea. One consideration is costs. At the local and intermediate levels most districts cannot afford very many development service workers in the short run. It is not realistic for a small number of local groups to meet the costs of a health care worker, local bank agent, and agricultural extension agent. Local organizations need to build their own skills in all areas and expect the development federation to have greater skills and the ability to facilitate access to even greater specialized knowledge and help.

74. A second compelling argument for a hybrid form is that it provides the best building block in creating the capability for socially responsible regional planning. The internal dialogues in the federation and between the federation staff and local groups will uncover competing priorities and the relative intensity of each. The federation's efforts to create organic intellectuals and democratic practice should lead to a larger social visions, to multi-federation dialogues and to regional planning efforts. Such efforts will be far more legitimate and practical than elite blueprints based quite often on brief rural development tourism. The poor need balanced regional development. The best way to get such results is to take charge of both planning and implementation.

75. Evaluation of a development federation over time will not be easy, as many products are not easily quantifiable. Yet the federation and its staff must be accountable to the people it serves, to its initial funders and to society. Not-for-profit third sector activities fall in the cracks, but interdisciplinary researchers have continued to improve the theory and

practice of social programme evaluation.27/ Some of their findings are summarized here because many still think of evaluation as a discrete, post-project exercise to quantify results and assign blame.

76. Evaluation is a sociopolitical process involving stakeholders and evaluators in a continuous construction and reconstruction of the social product and its meaning. Data collecting and valuation cannot be separated or value-free. Local perspectives and participative process are intrinsic if the results are to have local utility. Evaluation is never a finished product but rather an open-ended multi-directional educational effort that should raise more questions than it answers. Evaluation should be a collaborative exercise in educational empowerment and sharing accountability. Yet there also need to be mechanisms of peer review, redress, and some boundaries of expected performance, at least until local groups have established their own sense of standards.

77. The practicality of such development federations rests in sum on a number of variables: the energy and ability of a group of activists to raise initial funds; the sophistication of political strategies and negotiations with other institutional actors; and the quality of services provided and the material success of local groups that would provide open-ended funding. Leadership is also crucial; in a review of 18 of the most successful projects worldwide, quality leadership played a big role. 28/ The federation vision has sought to learn both from success and from the failures of recent decentralization experience. One new survey of such cases concluded with four principles of effective practice: appropriately small size to make local self-government practical; wide latitude of autonomy to meet expressed needs; formal legal expression that cannot be unilaterally revoked from above and primary accountability to local people.29/ The federation meets three of four criteria. It would mutually be vulnerable to state repression and thus, as discussed, has the need to network in the power structure.

78. Feasibility depends in part on local legitimacy and part on strategic wisdom and creativity as discussed, but there are also more general environmental influences that the federations can constructively modify. Federations can create a range of development education material for local schools and media, especially case material on success. They can do a variety of investigative reporting to see where social services and markets are particularly flawed and start in motion change processes. Some societies call this the ombudsman role. They can make particular effort to break down the cultural barriers hobbling women. It is clear from a generation of experience that even small successful women's projects run into chauvinist boundaries.30/ Unless this becomes a major issue in development education and public advocacy, the work of the development catalyst at the local level will remain very difficult. That work, in any case, will not be at all easy, as Part IV now chronicles.

SECTION IV: LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT FOR PARTICIPATORY RURAL DEVELOPMENT

79. The local practice of participatory development has been studied and illustrated by a body of literature and case material that has grown appreciably over the 1980s. 31/ Thus this section gives short shrift to intellectual debates and turns to the complexities of different kinds of marginalization and disempowerment processes at the local level. For if participatory development is to succeed in practice it cannot mystify or ignore subtle aspects of politics, economics or culture. Practice then begins by participatory research and preparation by the poor for small group action with the assistance of a development catalyst. Group formation, internal work culture and external economic and political strategies of small groups are the subsequent practical topics.

80. Africa has always had many forms of group activity. Precolonial institutions included the clan, age-set, brotherhood and diverse communal aid efforts. Colonialism and the market fractured some and helped generate new cultural, political and economic ties. Many kinds of patrilineal and matrilineal extended families survive to this day. Some households exist in nuclear families, but none is an island unto itself. For production, reproduction, and circulation it is common to find variable networks of co-operative activity. Thus the contexts of poverty will not be just lack of labour power, productive resources or market outlet, they will also include past and present social ties. Such ties may be preserving a modest state of livelihood, working over time to expand livelihood in a predictable way (as in some pastoral societies), or conversely maintaining or expanding cultural or structural inequality. Samples of how such social ties reproduce themselves in development efforts illustrate some of the major challenges development catalysts face in entering villages and trying to mobilize the poor for self-help.

81. Typically one or more forms of inter-personal and local institutional inequalities interact with ecological and resource limits and with a series of more systemic inequalities created by cash cropping, commercialization, imperfect markets, state investments and growth projects. In brief, analysis of inequality demands social and systemic context. Clientage exists in many forms, routinized with long-term reciprocities expected in extended families or reproduced in seasonal labor ties. Unequal market relations and service access show up in rural trade of consumer goods, in money-lending, and in selling to oligopolists or state marketing agencies. The talents effect - those that have, get - is particularly evident in unequal cattle holding, unequal transport, credit and storage facilities, and the use of political or cultural office. Within the family or clan, patriarchy and age discrimination work to disadvantage women and the young.

82. Learning is the first stage of participatory practice. It precedes any form of institution-building or resource transfer. The quality and quantity of learning far exceeds that of conventional project work. Bright ideas and quality citizenship by motivated people are to be used in place of high technology and foreign capital to end poverty. Learning has content, process, style and purpose. Here the purpose is empowerment of the poor, to improve their own livelihood through consciousness raising, skill

development, institution-building, labor and investment. This discussion moves first to some of the preliminary curriculum for the catalyst and then to the steps and style of participatory research.

83. The word curriculum has an unfortunate connotation of having bounded edges. Education for the catalyst has no bounds - philosophy, history, culture, art, institutions, psychology, material culture and so forth. Yet there are some aspects of personal style and some analytical terrains that need at least some coverage. There is space for a few issues to be noted here. In every region a catalyst will face villages with specific cultural patterns and historical experience with markets and aid projects. Yet villages will not have an endless number of internal political configurations. It is both possible and useful to consider some generic ways in which power and resources are organized and the kinds of strategic questions one might face in entering such a village for dialogue with and organizing by the poor. Reflecting on such a village typology will at least start consideration of how organizations of the poor could survive and prosper in different kinds of non-democratic settings.32/

84. The relatively isolated hierarchical village with little market contact is still fairly common. Power rests with an oligarchy which controls allocation of most productive resources and uses patronage and religion as cultural justification for inequality. The poor live at or near subsistence and feel resigned to or satisfied by prevailing security measures. Yet their situation is not stable as the radical changes of market forces attest. Elites may look upon any outsider as a threat. Focus of initial education and group effort may have to be a cultural, religious or even athletic activity. The catalyst needs to work slowly from where people are. All cultural systems have development components.

85. Religion, for example, is not necessarily a force for the status quo and a support of vested interests. There are examples of social mobilization using elements from a number of major traditions. The key point is not to start with a vision of dramatic cultural change but to start where people are and use religion as a terrain of consciousness raising. The catalyst must prepare well:

> know the authentic teachings of people's religion;
> understand the progressive role of religon in the socio-historic context in which it came to a society, and discuss these with the people;
> look for positive values in people's religion in today's context, and invoke them to promote peoples' action in a progressive direction without rejecting their faith;
> expose false teachings of religion by vested interests, and initiate reflections by the people on the motivation behind such abuse of religion as a part of an awareness-raising effort. 33/

86. In relatively egalitarian and isolated social units or villages, there are potentially less immediate problems. There is shared poverty with communal mechanisms more or less functional depending on drought and ecological limits. People are likely to be used to co-operative efforts for

specific purposes and open to more. The obstacles are going to be more technical and ecological than social in nature. Health and literacy initiatives may be well received. A greater challenge for the catalyst will be working through the trade offs for different levels and kinds of self-reliance. The logic and benefits of the prevailing cropping system must be clear before suggestions of changes that greatly diminish self-reliance. Yet self-reliance will lessen as market pressures grow, so the implications of each stage need clarification for equity and sustainability.

87. There are more and more villages of recent creation. These immigrant villages reflect local economies' influx or transition around major cities or new transport links. Sadly as well such villages are also at many border areas, signifying the prevalence of armed conflict and political oppression. There has been a general approach to such settlements called disaster relief, treating residents as incompetent victims. An extremely valuable evaluation of programmes for Ugandan refugees in Sudan also illustrates the effectiveness of participatory research in mobilizing refugees to new ventures. 34/ The catalyst must be skilled at social bridge building as base organizations will not grow quickly from multiple cultures.

88. The stratified smallholder village, whose activity is geared to exporting, creates substantial political challenges for a catalyst and small group effort. Social position and identity may well be defined in small increments of wealth dividing middle and smallholders. Multiple outside links for inputs and markets would create more vertical alliances for village elites; they would also be more conscious of the implications of local social change. The poor are likely to lack productive resources and thus to hire out their labor at whatever local wages are possible. This is a particularly conflictual environment for a development catalyst, one that require long-term vertical and horizontal development education, defensive alliances and modest initial steps.

89. Africa has many communities where the resource base is now so poor that male members emigrate for extended periods leaving women the predominant food producer. In Quthing district of Lesotho three-quarters of 18,750 households were women-headed. Most fared poorly even with remittances from husbands. 35/ There are even more resource and environmentally stressed villages where the catalyst must invest great energies into tapping a resource network for alternatives, while at the same time exploring the practicality of small-scale ecological renewal and the political economy of why there has not heretofore been incentive for such activity.

90. Africa has one further type of local community, one on or near a plantation and controlled by it. It is a particularly nondemocratic political culture. A development catalyst or even one nearby development federation has no immediate chance for change. A longer process of multi-level education on worker-owned and managed enterprises - their comparative productivity, equity, and institutional effectiveness - must persuade various state actors. Real development in most situation is not quick and easy.

91. This small survey into one area of the eduction of a catalyst (promoter, animator, etcetera in other studies) illustrates again that there

is no substitute for substantial local learning if one wants even to understand the issues, never mind implement sustainable solutions. Thus with a finite amount of such educational preparation, the catalyst can only hope to be partially prepared. A crucial consideration then becomes the psychological disposition, confidence, and interpersonal skill of the catalyst, habits of a lifetime but also skills than can and will improve with practice.

92. These issues of style have been the subject of various workshop discussions.36/ Honesty in all communication is one element. The goal is empowering education. Lecturing, leading, providing the answers, being autocratic or partisan or disparaging, these are not empowering interactions. A catalyst enters a community to share as a friend, even a model, is comfortable with his (or her) limits, admits mistakes and ignorance, and seeks through more and less organized ways to create the chance for educational dialogue on felt needs and problems, how they have been addressed or ignored and what might be alternative options. It is not a process of guiding or manipulating but of facilitating; that is truly a fine line, an art that will take practice.

93. A catalyst, after as much reflection in these and other diverse issues of substance and style, enters a village for an initial period of observation, inquiry, dialogue, networking and overall exploration. The process is termed participatory research, a mutual dialogue leading to a social construction of a shared reality. The techniques and arenas vary widely from small group discussion and individual dialogue to public meetings, community seminars, audiovisual material and popular theater and even educational retreat camps. There is now a wide body of case material and practical literature to supplement the classic study of Bhoomi Sena. 37/ The common goal is a conscientization: a process "in which men, not as recipients but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness of the sociological reality which shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality.38/

94. There are clearly many topics that could serve usefully to deepen sociological awareness: human need; conflict; process and relationship; family social relations; community relations and much else. Marginalized people, for example, live in a world of conflict. Small group discussions could begin with vignettes to sharpen a collective consciousness about patterns of conflict, conflict resolution, oppression, winners and losers. Types of conflict, arenas of conflict, uneven access to resources, the legal basis of oppression and much more come into such discussion. Are women to hold separate discussions indefinitely and thus reinforce prevailing discrimination? Patriarchy will not end overnight, but it must start to end at this stage as must other forms of discrimination.39/ A healthy system begins with healthy foundations.

95. From participatory research to small group formation is the huge terrain of community organizing for which no short discussion does justice. Individual poor households fare poorly against concentrated power. A small group of 8 and 15 households, acting together to build group skills to gain access to resources, can expand productive activities and defend their material and political gains. Effective groups are not appointed but instead are self-selected through a period of shared struggle and learning.

A catalyst may help to facilitate this process, some by planning a sequence of steps, some by use of spontaneous situations.

96. Through such a process participation becomes real, the logic of joining is clear, and people develop a personal stake in the outcome. Groups come from comparable backgrounds and select leaders with similar interests; a major survey of more than 200 groups in Asia found that the key to successful groups was not the advent of credit or new technology but in fact the ability of groups to prevent elites from joining and dominating. Leadership evolves from group process and is earned. Groups organize for felt needs, goals that members invest in emotionally. Internal democratic process, rotating leadership, continued education and some early material success work to build legitimacy and sustainability.

97. The number of needs will clearly be quite large. It has become fashionable to suggest that small loans through group channels for productive purposes is an efficient way to facilitate group process and advance livelihood. The Grameen Bank experience and others shows that the combination of group suasion and quality oversight does produce material gain and timely loan repayments. It is not clear in the African context, however, that credit is the key missing ingredient. Land, labor, market access, ecological decay, and patriarchy are often the keys. Loans may be crucial in making early tangible gains, but gains that cannot be protected from husbands or that are wiped out by inflated prices of consumer goods will not continue to appeal.

98. It is thus the group process as part of a federation of citizen efforts that holds out real hope to attack the serious and entrenched problems of rural Africa. A certain critical mass is necessary to start breaking down patriarchy or clientage, to set up and sustain an independent credit and marketing network, to maintain local infrastructure and build new social services, or to invest the labor necessary for pressing large-scale ecological renewal. Citizens do these things. The African future will be a social construction by some at the expense of others, or it will be a social construction by citizens for the good of all, or it will be a balance of the two. It will be up to development catalysts to see how healthy that balance can be if it has to be a balance.

SECTION VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

99. The discussion in the preceding four Sections shows that a global consensus has emerged in favour. Participatory Rural Development (PRD) in Africa and elsewhere. It is a complex and yet compelling imperative and requires, inter alia, raising the consciousness of the hitherto excluded majority of the population; otherwise known as rural poor. Their poverty is both structural and conjectural. A systems approach, rather than a fragmented one, is needed to deal with rural poverty and accelerate PRD.

100. But, Africa is an uneviable position. Its member States are terrians of struggle between contending forces with self-interested agendas. Despite this handicap, the continuing socio-economic crisis in Africa provides the rationale for national institutions, including Government, with legitimacy, trust and accountability for PRD. In PRD, there has to be a trade-off between participation and quality. The democratization of development must draw or both participatory processes and substantive expertise.

101. Inter-disciplinary education is the central focus of every stage of PRD. Such education would involve at least five areas of study: (i) historical sociology; (ii) global economic system; (iii) area studies especially anthropology; (iv) political economy; (v) organization studies and one or more technical subjects. Much of this education will have to be part of self-development since there is no such formal academic programme. A core element in all such educational efforts needs to be the lessons of success from within Africa.

102. To make inter-disciplinary education of practical use, the existing formal institutions of the member-States (such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Organizations concerned with rural credit, Research Institutes) will have to be reformed. Similarly, the macro-economic framework of the member States will be to reconsidered and aligned with the requirements of PRD. Africa may deliberately decide to remain "rural", de-link from the decades of dependent development and bondages and develop, with equity and self-reliance. It is impractical to suggest new contours of prices, markets and PRD as a standard blueprint. Each state has to undertake a sustained comparative historical inquiry, build up its empirical base and social planning and create the solid foundations for PRD.

103. The state may create an enabling climate at national level by appropriate decentralization. This is necessary but not sufficient. The rural poor themselves have to build up their intermediate institutions as both service organizations and as a defensive mechanism. Such intermediate entities, to be cost effective, require the rural poor to organize into small groups working as a co-operative federation with one or more levels of service organizations. The federation should be catalytic and capacity building for them and defend their interest.

104. The intermediate institutions of the rural poor will have to inter-act with, build tactical and long term alliances, defend against, and draw upon at least four groups of institutional actors: (i) line agencies of the state; (ii) state and local Government; (iii) local political and economic

elites and (iv) local associations, NGOs, cultural groups and similar independent group activities.

105. These intermediate institutions of the poor may serve at two levels. A larger number of them will work directly with PRD catalysts and local groups and provide day to day assistance. One such institution might help eight to fifteen local groups with full time para-professionals. The second level of these institutions would handle very technical issues relating to health, law, credit, or the bureaucratic needs and integration of women, education or work ethics political problems. Depending on population and area there might be one or several per district. Such institutions, at both levels, may be a hybrid-part school, part bank, part agricultural research, part lobby and so on. The performance of these institutions should be subject to evaluation, which is an open-ended multi directional effort. It should be a collaborative effort in educational empowerment and sharing responsibility.

106. These intermediate institutions of the rural poor need also to collaborate with the existing local organizations, based on clan, age-set, brotherhood and diverse communal aid efforts. These local organizations may not initially be receptive to the approach of PRD. They have to be gradually persuaded to endorse and support it through education, which precedes any form of institution-building or resource transfer. Education would lead to conscientization of the leaders of the local organizations and empowerment of the rural poor. This should help a new social construction, after a process of constructive destruction, for the good for all or at least a balance of the two. It will be up to PRD catalysts to see how healthy that balance can be and how fast it will lead to PRD of Africa.

Recommendations

In the light of the discussion in Section I to IV and the conclusions the member States may wish to consider the following recommendations to:

(i) institutionalize a new form of state-citizen dialogue, making provision for participation of the rural poor and other disadvantaged segment of the population such as women for self-reliant rural development, with equity;

(ii) provide scope for healthier state-rural relations by political decentralization. By redesigning power and implementation effectiveness, as well as due to resource limitations, the logic and practicality of decentralization will grow, opening space for new or more active forms of associational life such as intermediate institutions;

(iii) build in participatory practices into institutional reform and/or encourage work culture in new institutions, into policy making, implementation and evaluation;

(iv) facilitate rural poor to build up their own intermediate institutions as both service organizations and defensive mechanism. They need to organize themselves into small groups, working as a co-operative federation for such intermediate organizations to be viable. An organized poor is the essential

foundation and support for participatory rural development. A federation of the organized poor may be involved with agricultural specialists working for intermediate service organizations, which mediate farming systems research. Over time many line agency local staff might move to intermediate organizations for more secure, development career. Federations would take a larger role in line agency policy making to assure more gender, class, and regional equality and more focus on organic, self-reliant agronomic practice and ecological renewal. Current reform efforts in agricultural research and credit go part way, illustrating the limits of reform created from the top down alone;

(v) consider the possibility of carefully staged process of selective de-linking from the decades of "dependent development" and bondage while building relatively autonomous, if not self-reliant economic base for participatory rural development at home;

(vi) provide rural credit to help the poor in large numbers. The process should involve self-organization of the poor working with an independent entity rather than village banks or funds, subject to local politics. Participation and control are the keys to mobilization of local resources;

(vii) adopt effective development education policy linking (a) subsistence survival given demographic trends, (b) ecological survival and sustainability, (c) financial sustainability, (d) state and local employment and its quality and (f) cultural health;

(viii) take concrete steps to make formal educational institutions more responsive to the development needs of rural Africa. Teacher training and the basic curriculum need to put more emphasis on the uses of literacy, numeracy, basic science and health issues for rural careers in farming, agro-industry, social and market services. Every line agency should build in career training modules on development and challenge and reward personnel for further self-directed learning and leadership initiative;

(ix) give tangible rewards to faculty-members doing field research leading to practical solutions to rural sector's development problems;

(x) build up skills and institutions at the local and regional levels. Young school leavers, with idealism, could be particularly open to such a challenge for PRD.

NOTES

1. The best guides to this vast literature are Guy Gran (1987) An Annotated Guide to Global Development (Olney, MD: Resources for Development and Democracy) and his ongoing review columns in World Development. The important recent study of Mondragon is WF and KK Whyte (1988) Making Mondragon: The Growth and Dynamics of the Working Co-operative Complex (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press).

2. Michael Stahl (1990) Constraints to Environmental Rehabilitation Through People's Participation in the Northern Ethiopian Highlands. Geneva: UNRISD, Disc. Paper 1.3.

3. Grameen type projects are spreading rapidly in Africa. An encouraging report on the People's Bank of Nigeria by Newslink Africa is reprinted in the September-October 1990 issue of Development Forum.

4. Classic case material appears in R. Bromley and C. Gerry, eds. (1979) Casual Work and Poverty in Third World Cities (New York: John Wiley).

5. John Illiffe (1987) The African Poor: A History (Cambridge: Cambridge UP).

6. Her seminal article on peasant-state relationships first appeared in Review of African Political Economy, 10 (1978). English readers will also find it in Judith Heyer et al., eds. (1981) Rural Development in Tropical Africa (New York: St.Martin's).

7. See Alain de Janvry (1981) The Agrarian Question and Reformism in Latin America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP), pp. 141-151.

8. The pioneering study on this basic theory of macro-political economy is on Brazil. See Peter Evans (1979) Dependent Development (Princeton, NY: Princeton UP).

9. See recently Azzam Mahjoub, ed. (1990) Adjustment or Delinking? The Africn Experience (London: Zed Books).

10. An important recent review is Michael Bratton (1989) "Beyond the State: Civil Society and AssociationalLife in Africa," World Politics, 41,4:407-430.

11. See in particular Guy Gran (1987) op.cit., n.1. Besides the review column in World Development, regular review is suggested of IFDA Dossier, Rural Development Abstracts, International Development Abstracts and some of the important theoretical and area studies journals.

12. For basic discussions see William Whyte (1981) Participatory Approaches to Agricultural Research and Development (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Rural Development Committee) and Peter Matlon et al. (1984) Coming Full Circle: Farmer's Participation in the Development of Technology (Ottawa: IDRC). The current globalliterature is well covered in Rural Development Abstracts.

13. World Bank (1989) Staff Appraisal Report - Republic of Ghana Rural Finance Project (Report 7554-Gh., April 19), unpublished.

14. ECA, Report to the Sixth Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs on Organization of Credit Schemes at Grassroots Level for Rural Development in Africa, Addis Ababa, 1990, pp. 10-12.

15. The literature on the Grameen Bank is now quite large. The best long study is Andreas Fuglesand and Dale Chandler (1987) Participation as Process - What we can learn from Grameen bank, Bangladesh (Oslo, Norway: NORAD).

16. See in particular Richard Alan White (1978) Paraguay's Autonomous Revolution, 1810-1840 (Albuquerque, NM: Univ. of New Mexico Press).

17. The basic recent study synthesized here is Dieter Senghaas (1982 Ger., 1985) The European Experience: A Historical Critique of Development Theory (Warwickshire, UK: Berg Pub. Ltd.).

18. Drawn from ibid., pp. 88-91.

19. See, for example, Fatima Mahmoud (1984) The Sudanese Bourgeoisie: Vanguard of Development (London: Zed), p. 83ff. Also see the work of Abdalla Elhassan in a 1985 Univ. of East Anglia dissertation and an article in Tony Barnett and Abbar Abdelkarim, eds. (1988) Sudan: State, Capital and Transformation (Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm).

20. See (i) Michael Bratton (1987) "The Comrade and the Countryside: The Politics of Agricultural Policy in Zimbabwe," World Politics, 39,2:174-202; (ii) Sheldon Gellar (1990) "State Tutelage vs. Self-Governance. The Rhetoric and Reality of Decentralization in Senegal, "pp. 130-147 in James Wunsch and Dele Oluwo, eds. The Failure of the Centralized State: Institutions and Self- governance in Afirca (Boulder, Co: Westview); (iii) to sample the theoretical diversity, old and recent items include: Andrew Coulson (1982) Tanzania - A Political Economy (New York: Oxford); Issa Shivji, ed. (1986) The State and the Working People in Tanzania (Dakar CODESRIA); Jannik Boesen et al., eds. (1986 Tanzania: Crisis and Struggle for Survival (Uppsala: SIAS); John Sender and Sheila Smith (1990) Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study (London: Routledge); and Ernest Maganya (1990) "The Role of Popular Participation in Meeting the Challenge of Recovery and Development in Africa, the Case Study of the United Republic of Tanzania" (Addis Ababa: UN ECA, E/ECS/ICPP/90/35) and Coulson argues, op. cit. p. 255.

21. See Michael Schatzberg (1980) Politics and Class in Zaire: Bureaucracy, Business and Beer in Lisala (New York: Holmes & Meier) and (1988) The Dialectics of Oppression in Zaire (Bloomington, IN: Univ. of Indiana); Thomas Callaghy (1984) The State-Society Struggle: Zaire in Comparative Perspective, chapters 5-7 (New York: Columbia UP); Michael Bratton (1980) The Local Politics of Rural Development: Peasant and Party-State in Zambia (Hanover, NH: Univ. Press of New England); and E. Wayne Nafziger (1988) Inequality in Africa: Political Elites, Proletariat, Peasants, and the Poor (New York: Cambridge UP).

22. See A. Fuglesang and D. Chandler, (1987), Participation as Process: What we can learn from Grameen Bank, Bangladesh, Oslo, Norway, NORAD and Atiur Rahman (1986) Impact of Grameen Bank Interventions on the Rural Power Structure (Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Grameen bank Evaluation Project, WP 2.

23. The model that follows draws heavily on my own previous work Guy Gran (1983) Development by People (New York: Praeger), chapters 6-7 as well reflections on the Grameen Bank and that of the Mondragon co-operative federation in Spain.

24. David C. Korten and Felipe Alfonso, eds. (1981) Bureaucracy and the Poor: Closing the Gap (West Hartford: Kumariam Press), p. 220.

25. A typology first suggested in Milton Esman et al. (1980) Para-professionals in Rural Development (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ., Rural Development Committee.

26. See Gran (1987) op. cit. (n.1) for leads to many and always consult Assignment Children.

27. See, for example, Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln (1989) Fourth Generation Evaluation (Newbury Park, CA: Sage).

28. Guy Gran (1983) "Learning from Development Success: Some Lessons from Contemporaty Case Histories" (Washington: NASPAA; WP 9).

29. Dele Oluwi (1970) "The Failure of Current Decentralization Programs," pp. 79-99 in James S. Wunsch and Dele Oluwu, eds. op. cit. (n. 20(ii))

30. A particularly fine collection of cases is Shimwaayi Muntemba, ed. (1985) Rural Development and Women: Lessons from the Field (Geneva: ILO/WEP, 2 volumes).

31. The following on practice of participatory development are particularly helpful: Koenraad Verhagen (1984) Cooperation for Survival and (1987) Self-Help Promotion (both, Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute); and John Burbidge, ed. (1988) Approaches that Work in Rural Development (New York: KG Saur). Comments on many recent texts can be found in Guy Gran (1990) "Book Notes," World Development, 18,8:1183-1190.

32. Some important work on this was done by Leen Boer (1982) "The Variety of local contexts of participatory development projects: an attempt at systematization, "pp. 126-183 in Benno Galjart and Dieke Buijs, eds., Participation of the Poor in Development: Contributions to a Seminar (Leiden: Institute of Cultural and Social Studies, Leiden Development Studies 2). The following draws on this and the authors previous study (1983) Development By People,pp. 189-195.

33. Anisur Rahman (1988), The Challenge of Promoting People's Self Reliance: Highlights of a Regional Workshop of Trainers in Participatory Rural Development, ILO, General (ILO Programme on Participatory Organizations of the Rural Poor), p. 12.

34. Barbara Harrell-Bond (1986) Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees (New York: Oxford UP).

35. ECA, Report to the Committee of Inter-Governmental Experts of the Lusaka-based MULPOC on Effects of Migrant Mining Labour on Rural Development, Particularly on Agrarian Productivity in the Southern African context, Addis Ababa, 1990, pp. 14-19.

36. Rahman, op. cit. (n. 33), pp. 21-25, for example, has much of use.

37. The Bhoomi Sena case appeared in Development Dialogue, 1979, 2:3-70 and has been reprinted in G.V.S. De-silva et al (1988) Towards a Theory of Rural Development (Lahore, Pakistan: Progressive Pub.). Material on participatory research comes from many sources, notably the Indian Social Institute, the International Council of Adult Education (Toronto), and the ILO/WEP; new citations appear regularly in an irregular newsletter from ICAE and in IFDA Dossier.

38. Quoted in De-Silva (1979) op. cit. (n. 37) p. 56.

39. For a more extended discussion on fragments of a curriculum for conscientization, see Gran (1983) Development By People, op. cit. p. 157 ff.